AIF Portfolios:
The experience @ ASMS

Good but room for improvement.

AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE & MATHEMATICS SCHOOL

Yr 10 + 11 + 12

Extraordinary Learning

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Government of South Australia

Department for Education

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Acknowledgement of Country

The ASMS stands on the unceded lands of the Kaurna Meyunna: the Kaurna People.

The Australian Science and Mathematics School acknowledges and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we live and work.

We proudly pay respect to First Nations elders, past, present, and emerging.

We acknowledge and recognise the advanced wisdom and practices developed over more than 65,000 years by First Nations Peoples. In particular we recognise their sustainable management of lands and waters.

The ASMS acknowledges the responsibility and gift of First Nations Knowledge and commits to learn from and alongside Aboriginal people to protect Australia's traditional heritage.

We also pay respect to the cultural authority of first nations peoples from nations around Australia. Including our Aboriginal Staff and Students.

Table Introductions

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- Introduce yourselves at your table
- Share: Your school, years teaching AIF/RP, and one question you hope to answer today
- If you're an AIF newcomer, share what you're most curious or nervous about
- Discuss the challenges of teaching AIF or assessing the Portfolio
- Identify one shared challenge that your table experiences

Part of this Presentation

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AIF Implementation

- What we did
- What we learned

Portfolio Performance Standards

- How we interpreted
- Some examples

Our Implementation Journey

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Started 2025 from a good place

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- ASMS has a learning culture which supports enquiry and pro-active learning
- Most learning is presented and assessed in an interdisciplinary way using a cumulative ‘evidence of learning’ approach rather than focussing on stand alone assessment pieces.
- History of success with Research Project – 48% students achieving in the A grade band.
- A number of teachers with a high level of experience in mentoring students in self-directed learning.

But...

- Student anxiety about the change from RP to AIF
- We decided to completely change how we delivery structure of the subject
- Some staff turnover and new members into the team.

School Context

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- Completed by students in Year 11
- All students complete by the end of term 3
- Resulted at end of year.
- 1x100 min session per week in semester 1 – Portfolio and Progress Checks
- 4 x100min session per week for 4 weeks in Term 3 – Output of Learning and Appraisal

Semester 1 Programme

Term	Week	Focus for the Week
1	2	(Re) Introduction to AIF – overview of structure & requirements
1	3	Finalising topic
1	4	Folio Development
1	5	Road Safety Presentation
1	6	Panel Presentation – Thursday PM LSG + Passion Project
1	7	Folio Development
1	8	Folio Development
1	10	Folio Development
1	11	1st Progress Check due
2	1	Folio Development
2	2	Folio Development
2	4	Folio Development
2	5	Folio Development
2	6	Folio Development – finished portfolio
2	7	2nd Progress Check
2	8	2nd Progress Check due
2	9 (possible extra time)	To be confirmed

Semester 2 Programme Term 3 - 4 Week Intensive

Week	Focus
1	Output of Learning
2	Output of Learning / Appraisal
3	Appraisal
4	Appraisal

Issue 1: One lesson a week – absentees and check-ins

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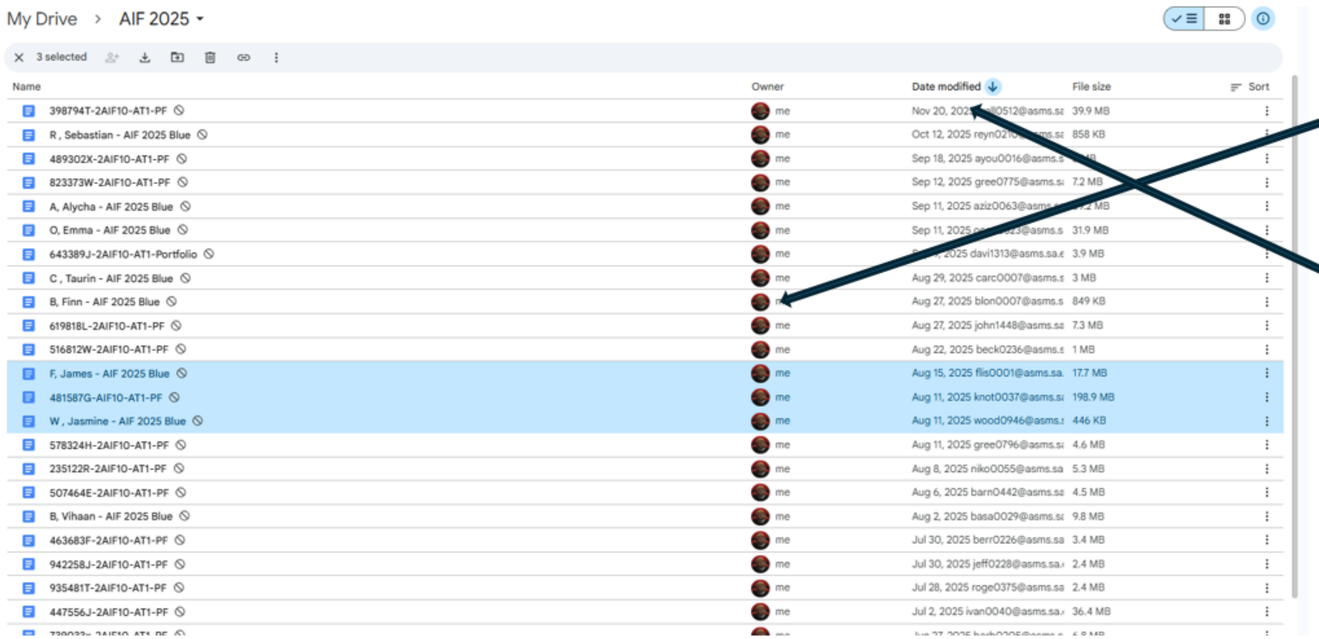
Addressed by

- Real time folio monitoring via ‘Doctopussed’ Google docs
- Teachers were associated with student’s house to facilitate follow up



Teacher ‘owns’ doc so students can not completely delete file and history can be viewed and restored if necessary – teacher can open and leave feedback at any time.

Quick check to see the last time the file was modified by student.

Issue 2 : Student commitment to a Learning focus

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Addressed by introducing Panel Presentations

- Students present a 90 second overview of their Learning Plans, their learning goal and their learning strategies
- Delivered to a teacher Panel, with Year 10/11s as audience.
- Panel includes 3 or 4 teachers, chaired by an AIF teacher.
- Both teachers and students use an electronic feedback form.
- Students then receive their feedback to action.

Why they help

- Public accountability motivates clarity and depth
- Cross-disciplinary feedback provides fresh perspectives
- Peer audience builds presentation skills and community
- Forces students to articulate their thinking early
- Identifies gaps before significant time is invested

Teachers new to AIF – all of us ! *(we were not a pilot school)*

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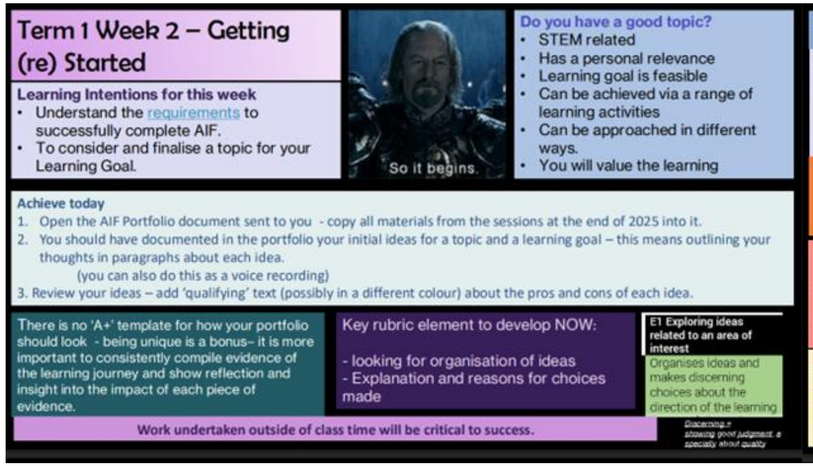
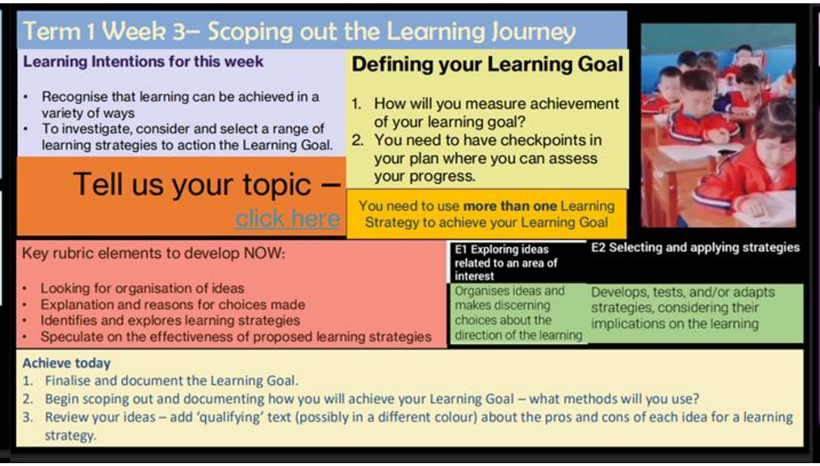
Building teacher capacity and confidence

- Connected with pilot school teachers for practical insights
- Reviewed and adapted resources from other schools
- Identified successful RP elements to carry forward
- Attended ASRT/AIF conferences for broader perspective
- Ongoing co-design of resources, benchmarking and internal moderation





Consistent understandings in the teaching team

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Why Consistency Matters:

In a self-directed subject where each student's portfolio is unique, consistency in our standards and support is essential for equity and credibility.

How we did it:

- Regular communication
- Shared assessment tools
- Internal moderation

Portfolio Marking Guidelines AIF

	E1- Exploring ideas related to an area of interest	E2 – Selecting and applying strategies	E3 – Selecting and Using Perspectives
A	Key characteristics: Student is making nuanced and informed decisions to progress the learning. Choices are justified and their implications on the learning discussed. Students may (not essential) often discuss alternative options and outline why these were not utilised.	At the A standard for E2 students must demonstrate evidence that they "develop, test, and/or adapt strategies, considering their implications on the learning." Ongoing consideration of how the various strategies contribute to the learning (both benefits and limitations) is incorporated. What differentiates this sample from a B (E2 – "Selects strategies and adjusts them for purpose to progress the learning") is the student led development, testing and/or adapting of the various strategies utilised. The student needs to clearly take agency for their learning in a detailed and well-considered manner.	"Selects and **synthesizes** relevant perspectives to progress the learning" Throughout the sample there should be evidence of the student selecting a range of targeted sources and considering different perspectives to identify the ideas that will best progress their learning and enable them to develop their output of learning. The student should show deliberate selection of relevant perspectives (e.g from articles, feedback etc) that align with their learning goal, showing discernment and strategic decision-making in the next steps of their learning. There should be evidence of synthesis from these perspectives. The student should demonstrate thoughtful planning that incorporates different perspectives to handle the complexities of their topic. The student takes steps to improve or modify the learning after gathering and synthesising a range of external perspectives.
B	"Purposefully explores a range of ideas and connects them to progress the learning" There should be evidence of the student initially exploring generally, then after identifying key areas that could significantly support their learning and skill development, focusing in on exploring and building upon those key areas.	Students must demonstrate evidence that they have "select[ed] strategies and adjust[ed] them for purpose to progress the learning." Through the strategies there should be clear evidence of reflection and adjustment to strategies to help progress the learning. What differentiates a B from a C (E2 – "Selects and applies strategies to complete tasks and/or goals") is the student has clearly adjusted their strategies to achieve their purpose and progress their learning than simply 'applying' them. The differentiation from an A (E2 – "Develops, tests and/ strategies, considering their implications on the learning") is often when there is lim of development and testing. While the student may reflect on their learning, the 'i the learning is not evidenced.	"Selects and **uses** relevant perspectives to progress the learning" Students are selecting a range of sources and perspectives to progress the learning – they have shown judgement to select ss the learning.
C	"Explores and builds on ideas related to an area of interest" We should see evidence of the student exploring the topic, and using what they learn to build Understanding, as well as the next steps they can take to explore further.	At the C standard for E2 students must demonstrate evidence that they have "sele applie[d] strategies to complete tasks and/or goals." What differentiates from a D (E2 – "Uses a strategy to complete a task") is that the should have clearly 'selected and used strategies' towards a clear goal. The samp differentiated from a B (E2 – "Selects strategies and adjusts them for purpose to p learning") when a student tends to rely on the familiar D1 for he says an appraisal quite get that but it's on my list when they are created. I haven't because I created handed it up but now I've got it next time I'll definitely put it on the student portal a look at it We're very transparent that we're happy to. We share everything with the yeah academic articles I was like it didn't feel very high but as soon as I got into th student driven side of things considering the implications of their RMIT in Melbour has his own business advising for culture and I'm just like okay maybe a good cho mentioned with the academic improvement is gonna be my first year Smith I teacl geography in history and my year 12 geography class that year and the one topic b to be the 11 topics that they had to choose from for the Phil studies and the one I al was soils it was just like you know it wasn't me. I was always an economic human geo and soils were not my jam of course one student pops up and he's like I want to so really bad literacy. Tons of drafting got him through. He then went on to do a PhD in soil strategies and	ange of different topic and their learning learning. dback or from

For a copy

SCAN ME

Table Activity

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Discussion

- What was (is currently) your biggest implementation challenge?
- What is your school doing to address it?

Portfolio Performance Standards

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Performance Standards*

* Natural Evidence of Learning

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	E1 Exploring ideas related to an area of interest	E2 Selecting and applying strategies	E3 Selecting and using perspectives	PA1 Seeking and responding to feedback
A	Organises ideas and makes discerning choices about the direction of the learning	Develops, tests, and/or adapts strategies, considering their implications on the learning	Selects and synthesises relevant perspectives to progress the learning	Seeks targeted feedback and makes discerning responses to progress the learning
B	Purposefully explores a range of ideas and connects them to progress the learning	Selects strategies and adjusts them for purpose to progress the learning	Selects and uses relevant perspectives to progress the learning	Seeks relevant feedback and makes appropriate responses to progress the learning

E1- Exploring ideas related to an area of interest

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E1 Exploring ideas related to an area of interest	Our Guide
Organises ideas and makes discerning choices about the direction of the learning	• Student is making nuanced and informed decisions to progress the learning. • Choices are justified and their implications on the learning discussed. • Students may (not essential) often discuss alternative options and outline why these were not utilised.

Evidence sample: “makes discerning choices “

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“Option 5 was the option selected to pursue for my AIF. I chose it because like none of the other options, it fit all the main criteria that I identified to be of utmost importance to make a good project. These were resource availability, difficulty of the project and a relation to my future career pathways.

This project was to build a helicopter collective (device to fly/control helicopter) for my home flight simulator. Like option 3 and unlike option 2, this project would be small enough to work on in Adelaide, and all required tools could easily be brought up from the farm. This project would also require less expensive tools than options 2 and 3. This project is in my opinion the perfect balance between being accomplishable and being too hard for the time frame given.

Rather than diving very deep into one specific practice like just focusing on soldering, this project would see me looking at a few different areas which I would prefer as then I will improve my skills in all these skills which could allow me to complete another project like this in the future. This project also has me working with my hands which is another positive. It also relates more to my future career pathways which is the main reason that it was chosen over option 3.”

Evidence sample: “makes discerning choices “

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Has knowledge of physics optimised the way we design instruments?

This question has a very strong link to STEM, and would allow me to explore how historical and modern advancements have influenced music (similar to a SHE investigating). This could also give me the opportunity to design/make my own instrument if time allowed it. I would have to look at this through different perspectives as 'optimisation' can be difficult to define in this context (differences in culture, genre etc).

How are concert halls optimised to produce sound?

This question also has a lot to do with physics. I would focus on how factors like shape of the hall, wall materials, ceiling height, and seating arrangement impact the production and resonance of sound as well as how different halls cna be designed to better suit certain types of arrangements. I may however find it difficult to find data/measurements for doing my own analysis.

Mathematical symmetry in music

This topic would include investigating the different types of symmetry found in musical compositions. I would investigate the different types of symmetry in compositions and how they influence the overall flow of a piece of music. Investigating this would include a lot of theoretical learning and 'case studies' of different pieces of music. I could also create my own composition based on different concepts of symmetry to incorporate more of a somewhat practical aspect.

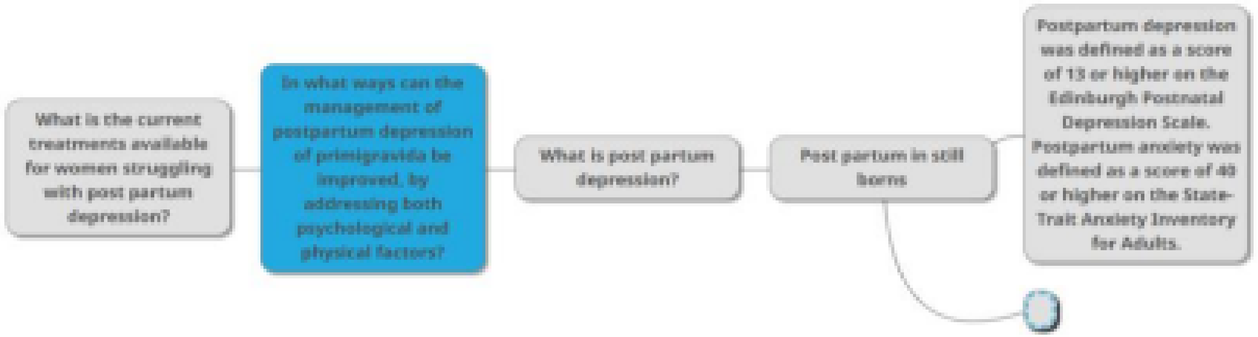
I ended up choosing the topic of ***mathematical symmetry in music***. I chose this topic as I think it will be interesting to explore connections between two things I have always thought to be completely unrelated; maths and music. I also like the idea of being able to create my own composition based on a mathematical concept as I think it will be a good creative challenge for me.

To make it easier for me to structure my learning and create a weekly timeline/plan, I decided to split my learning goal into sub questions. These sub questions are:

- What types of symmetry exist in music and how do they influence rhythm, structure, melody and harmony?
- How do composers use mathematical symmetry in their work?
- How can I use symmetry to create my own compositions?

Evidence sample: "Choices are justified and their implications on the learning discussed."

Evidence sample: “Students may discuss alternative options and outline why these were not utilised”

Mind map 1: Post Partum Depression Early Stages of Development  	**Reflection:** Although I did not decide on this topic for my AIF, I am glad I came across the topic. It has not only helped my on my AIF journey, but I feel a new sense of gratitude towards mothers. In relation to my AIF, I chose to change my subject to something which would be easily experimented, ideally at school.
So, Why Carp? I wanted to do something that was beneficial not only to me but also to the water community. Because of this, I decided to focus on a genuine local problem—carp. Carp control isn't just about trapping or using chemicals to kill them; it requires someone with compassion and an understanding of ecosystem dynamics, as well as conversational skills for engaging with fishers, Indigenous landowners, and specialists in the Coorong region. I came up with a way to combine primary research with hands-on experimentation, creating a strong cross-disciplinary foundation for my future learning.	

E2 – Selecting and applying strategies

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E2 Selecting and applying strategies	Our Guide
Develops, tests, and/or adapts strategies, considering their implications on the learning	• Must provide evidence that they are **considering the implications of their strategies on their learning** • Ongoing evidence of consideration of both benefits and limitations of strategies • The student should be showing how they have taken charge of their learning journey and undertaken actions to progress their learning in a detailed and well-considered manner. • Show that they have thought through their intended actions and then are able to look at the resulting learning and decide if they need to make changes.

Strategy	***Pros***	***Cons and potential risks***
Theoretical music learning	This strategy would give me a solid foundation in music theory by helping me understand the definitions of musical concepts and how they can be applied in composition settings. It is also a very easy strategy to link to composition practice and analysis.	While easily linked to it, this strategy doesn't provide any real practice and could feel overly dry/academic. There is also the risk that I could become too focused on rules and 'correctness' in my compositions, which could limit my creativity.
Score analysis	Analysing existing music would allow me to think structurally and stylistically, which would help me understand the choices that professional composers make. This understanding will enable me to emulate the works of my favourite composers by encouraging me to step out of my comfort zone when experimenting with techniques. In the end, taking aspects of how they work and adapting them to create my own style.	If I'm not careful and rely on a small set of composers, I could start emulating their style too closely, limiting the development of my own musicality (essentially leading to plagiarism). Also, analysing complex scores can also be very time-consuming and feel overwhelming if I don't have the proper prior knowledge.
Aural training/ transcription	This strategy would be very useful for developing my ear and overall sense of music. Transcribing music from recordings is often used to improve musical memory by strengthening the connection of what you hear and what you actually write on paper, making composing feel a lot more intuitive.	This strategy requires a lot of patient and consistent practice over time, especially at first. I am very unfamiliar with transcription and I may find it difficult to know if what I'm notating is accurate, particularly if I'm working with very dense or fast-paced music. It is also a very time-consuming process, and progress could feel very slow compared to other strategies.
Composition exercises	Composition exercises are great for isolating and practicing specific techniques without the	There aren't many cons for this strategy, however, general exercises could easily feel disjointed or

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Evidence sample: "Ongoing evidence of consideration of both benefits and limitations of strategies"

Learning strategies

Learning strategy	Application to my learning goal + potential drawbacks
Theoretical research	This technique will be mostly used to investigate my first sub question. It will provide me with a good foundation of knowledge of how mathematics connects to music, giving me the understanding I need to apply it when analysing other compositions and creating my own.
Composition analysis	This strategy will allow me to see how mathematical patterns can be seen in historical and contemporary works. Specifically, it will allow me to see how these concepts are used to create balance in music through different structures such as fugues and canons. This ties directly to my subquestion: how do composers use mathematical symmetry in their work? The only potential drawback of this method is that it can be affected by biases as musical analysis is a very individual and subjective topic.
Composition	This will include creating a composition of my own based on the learning I have been doing over the course of this project. Depending on how much time I have to complete this part of my project, I will be able to experiment with different types of symmetry and compare/contrast them.

This was my initial consideration of potential learning strategies (completed prior to my panel presentation). However, after my consideration of the feedback I received in my panel presentation, I changed my learning goal significantly which meant that I needed to reconsider some of the different learning strategies I will use and how I will use them. I also found that the changes made to my learning goal created a few more opportunities to explore or at least consider a few more learning strategies and how I could apply them to my learning.

Evidence sample: "…decide if they need to make changes"

E3 – Selecting and using perspectives

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E3 Selecting and using perspectives	Our Guide
Selects and synthesises relevant perspectives to progress the learning	• Throughout the portfolio there should be evidence of the student selecting a range of targeted sources and considering different perspectives to identify the ideas that will best progress their learning and enable them to develop their output of learning. • The student should demonstrate thoughtful **planning** that incorporates different perspectives to handle the complexities of their topic. • The student should justify their **deliberate selection** of relevant materials • The student should show consideration of perspectives (e.g. from articles, feedback etc) that have been used to achieve their learning goal. There should be evidence of **synthesis** from these perspectives. • The student takes steps to **improve or modify** the learning after gathering and synthesising a range of external perspectives.

Evidence sample: “selecting a range of targeted sources and considering different perspectives to identify the ideas”

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Glen Hill at Coorong Wild Fishery was present as the panel presentation and was featured in the ABC Eat the Invaders (Carp) along with his wife. Together, they own Coorong Wild Fisheries. Glenn was a recreational fisherman for over 30 years but when he moved from Victoria to the Coorong, he saw that there was an opportunity to do it for a living. he dedicated his future to the fishery and now distributes Coorong mullet, common carp and other types of fish to 8 local markets in South Australia. It's not i thought that he would be an ideal person to interview as he is one of the few skippers on the Coorong fishing for Carp. During is panel interview he said that he thinks that Carp is delicious!
this is just the email of the environmental institute of Adelaide university I thought that this would be a good source to email as they organised the panel presentation and they were closely linked with the original Eat the Invaders, episode 2 on Carp.
Major Lancelot "Moogy" Sumner is an elder who was present at the panel presentation. He is also featured in Episode 2 (Carp) of Eat the Invaders by ABC. I was able to find a Wikipedia page dedicated to him and through that I was able to find an organisation that he is closely associated to, The Ngarrindjeri Culture (https://www.ngarrindjeri-culture.org/major-sumner/?utm). Through his article on the website linked above he is described as a cultural advocate for the arts and craft and strong supporter in innovative arts and has featured in many media productions and culture collaborations. I thought that he would be the ideal person to reach out to as here lives and works in Adelaide and the Coorong and serves as the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority board member.
Maria is my aunt’s chef. She’s originally from Germany, which is one of the countries I found that eats carp as a seasonal delicacy. I thought it would be interesting to interview her, since I’ve met her a few times while staying with my aunt in Melbourne. I was able to get in touch with Maria by going on Facebook, checking my aunt’s friends list, and searching for her name.

Evidence sample: “thoughtful planning that incorporates different perspectives”

			items or not.
Expert Interview	Interviews with experts and professionals are highly credible and will provide me with information that may not be available through any other sources. I will be able to ask follow up questions to clarify any confusion I may have and I will be able to receive great feedback regarding my research.	This will be time consuming to arrange and conduct for both parties and the interviewee may provide biased answers instead of factual answers. Moreover, it may be difficult to get in contact with a professional such as a psychologist or a marketing expert unless I have connections or know certain people.	An interview will be advantageous to my research, allowing me to gain knowledge on different concepts, depending on who I am interviewing. An interview with a marketing expert would allow me to understand the strategies used by brands that encourage overconsumption. On the other hand, an interview with a psychologist will explain the concept of impulse buying, emotional spending, and cognitive biases to me. Lastly, I could dive deeper into spending habits by interviewing a consumer about their spending habits to gain an insight on their personal shopping habits.
Feedback is essential for refining my research and ensuring that my results are accurate and well supported. For this reason, it is important to ensure that I receive feedback at multiple stages through this journey in case I need to make any changes. I know that I will receive feedback regarding the spending habits and spending triggers of individuals through surveys. This will be crucial for my experiments as I would be able to put the data found in the surveys to test to ensure that the results are reliable. Interviews are also a crucial method for me to gain feedback. I can use the information provided by the experts to support or correct my findings, leading me in the correct direction. I can also utilise feedback from teachers and peers if they draft my work to ensure that my research has clarity and makes sense. Lastly, I can do a test trial of the experiment before I fully conduct it, ensuring that the process is clear and that the results are supporting my research I did before the experiment.			

PA1 – Seeking and responding to feedback

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PA1 Seeking and responding to feedback	Our Guide
Seeks targeted feedback and makes discerning responses to progress the learning	• There needs to be evidence of the student **seeking targeted and specific feedback** from **several sources** and the different ways that the student makes considered and deliberate responses to this feedback. • There should be clear and explicit explanation of how the use of this feedback helped to progress the learning.

Evidence sample: “seeking targeted and specific feedback from several sources”

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While I was waiting to receive all the answers to the survey questions, I visited LinkedIn and found that three professionals had replied to my message. One was James Witt, a psychologist in South Australia who asked me to send him the questions and the second was Hailan Yang, a student at Adelaide University studying the Bachelor of Psychology (advanced) and aspiring to be a clinical psychologist who also asked me to email her the interview questions. The last was Shankari Wijendra who was not sure if she could answer questions regarding fashion. These replies can be seen in figures 43, 44, and 45. I replied back to Jamie and Hailan stating that I was just waiting to finalise my data and I would send them the results as soon as I could and told Shankari that I was thankful for her reply anyway. My replies back to them can be seen in figures 46 and 47. Moreover, the professional I personally messaged, Rutba Dimani, had also replied to me. I replied back saying that I will send her the questions as soon as I sort through my data. This can be seen in figure 48.

feedback on the finished product. He was very impressed with the overall quality of the product and how it performed when connected to the sim. He had no major feedback on this but he did raise the point of how low the pivot point would be in comparison to the seat of my simulator. He thought that if I had an adjustable seat I could get it in a good position but I had already thought about this and while I was at Aerotech I took measurements of the black hawk collective's pivot point relative to the seat so that it is a match. This was David's only point of feedback. He also liked how the trim was physical instead of a digital trim like it is on almost all simulation hardware. I also took the finished product to Andrew Gregory so that he could have a look at the soldering and wiring of the collective. He was unable to, however, as the wiring was too hard to get a good look at connected to the boxes that were mounted to the wooden base. He said that from a distance they looked good but to properly tell he would need to be able to get a better look. This was unfortunate as I would have liked some feedback at the end so that I could further improve my soldering skills in the future. The below image shows one of my classmates flying the simulator, he was very inexperienced flying helicopters and I managed to capture the moment that he crashed. I also asked the other students who looked at and used my collective for feedback. All of the people who used my collective were impressed with it and I got one piece of feedback from a fellow student who said that I should tie the cables together as they come out of the grip as the gears in there could pinch a cable and cause significant damage to it. I had not noticed this issue so this piece of feedback was very helpful. When I went to zip tie the cables into a tighter bunch, I also noticed that the sharp edges of the pipe were rubbing against the cables which over time could have cut one. To fix this, I added some tape around the cable and the edges of the pipe to avoid this issue. Overall, taking my collective around to show a large number of people as well as people with specialised knowledge was very worthwhile as without it I could have caused significant damage to the wires of the collective.

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Evidence sample: "clear and explicit explanation of how the use of this feedback helped "

Table Activity

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Discussion

- What evidence do you look for with each Performance Standard?
- Which do you find most challenging to assess?
- How do you discern between A and B Band evidence?

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